

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AGRE-00 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /081 W

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R 080945Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5408

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, AG

SUBJECT: ALGERIAN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS; BOUMEDIENE TO RUN FOR
PRESIDENT; VOTING DATES SET

1. NATIONAL CONFERENCE CONVOKED NOV 6 FINISHED ITS WORK AND
ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

A. UNANIMOUS ADOPTION OF DRAFT CONSTITUTION.

B. NOMINATION BY FLN'S ACTING CHIEF MESSAADIA,
WITH SUPPORT FROM ALL MASS ORGANIZATIONS, OF MBOUMEDIENE
AS FLN'S CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT.

2. IN SPEECH CLOSING CONFERENCE, BOUMEDIENE MADE FOLLOWING
ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WOULD TAKE PLACE IN DECEMBER.

B. LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN JANUARY 1977.

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C. PREPARATIONS FOR FLN CONGRESS WOULD BE

MADE IN 1977. (ALTHOUGH TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S SPEECH NOT PUBLISHED, WE UNDERSTAND HE SAID CONGRESS WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE JUNE 19, 1978, 13TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS COUP D'ETAT.)

3. NO TEXT OF CONSTITUTION YET PUBLISHED AND SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT GIVEN IN PRESS REVEALS LITTLE ABOUT HOW ALGERIAN STATE TO BE ORGANIZED. CONSTITUTION, WHICH DESCRIBED AS FIRST AND PRINCIPLE APPLICATION OF NATIONAL CHARTER, IS TO BE JURIDICAL BASE OF ALGERIAN REPUBLIC. IT DEFINES ROLE OF WORKERS AND FARMERS IN POPULAR ASSEMBLIES, AND EXPLAINS HOW CULTURAL, AGRARIAN AND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS ARE TO WORK. INDIVIDUAL AND NON-EXPLOITATIVE PRIVATE PROPERTY GUARANTEED. IN FOREIGN POLICY, ALGERIAN REVOLUTION'S CONCEPTION OF MAGHREB, ARAB AND AFRICAN UNITY DEFINED.

4. PRESS COMMENTARY ON CONSTITUTION STRESSES IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION MADE BY MASS ORGANIZATIONS DURING RELATIVELY BRIEF DEBATES. PRIOR TO ONE-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE, LUMINARIES OF MASS ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING ARMY'S POLITICAL COMMISSARIAT, HELD TWO-DAY SEMINAR DURING WHICH DRAFT CONSTITUTION SAID TO HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY REVIEWED. BOUMEDIENE ALSO RECEIVED MASS ORGANIZATION HEADS. THRUST OF PRESS COMMENTARY SEEMS TO BE THAT RESULTS OF GREAT DEBATE ON NATIONAL CHARTER LAST SUMMER HAD IN SOME WAY BEEN TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN PREPARATION OF CONSTITUTION.

5. PRESS COMMENTARY ALSO SEEKS TO PORTRAY CONSTITUTION AS LATEST STEP IN DEVELOPMENT OF ALGERIAN REVOLUTIONARY STATE AND SOCIETY. OTHER KEY ELEMENTS IN POST-INDEPENDENCE ALGERIAN HISTORY SAID TO HAVE BEEN REORIENTATION REPRESENTED BY BOUMEDIENE'S 1965 COUP, ELECTION OF COMMUNAL ASSEMBLIES IN 1967 AND PROVINCIAL BODIES IN 1969, AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY THROUGH AGRARIAN REVOLUTION AND SOCIALIST MANAGEMENT OF ENTERPRISES. THESE MEASURES, PLUS IDEOLOGICAL CLARIFICATION GIVEN BY NATIONAL CHARTER, ARE BASES ON WHICH CONSTITUTION AND NATIONAL POPULAR ASSEMBLY WILL REST.

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6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH TIMETABLE FOR SOCIALIST INSTITUTION BUILDING WHICH BOUMEDIENE ANNOUNCED IN MID-1975 HAS SLIPPED CONSIDERABLY, THIS TASK IS PROCEEDING. IN JUNE 1975, PRESIDENT PROMISED THAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND ELECTED PRESIDENT WOULD BE IN PLACE ONE YEAR LATER. REGIME IS GETTING ON WITH JOB, ALBEIT SIX MONTHS LATE.

7. THROUGH MEDIA, REGIME HAS SOUGHT TO CONVEY TWO IMPRESSIONS: FIRST, THAT GREAT DEBATE ON NATIONAL CHARTER WAS SUFFICIENT, NOT ONLY FOR CHARTER ITSELF, BUT FOR REST OF NEW STATE INSTITUTIONS; AND SECOND, THAT CONSTITUTION WAS FIRST AND FOREMOST AN EXPRESSION OF, AND SUBORDINATE TO, NATIONAL CHARTER. WHATEVER THE LOGIC OF THIS BIT OF REASONING, INESCAPABLE FACT IS THAT CONSTITUTION DID NOT, AND APPARENTLY WILL NOT, BE PUT TO ANY SORT OF PUBLIC DEBATE PRIOR TO REFERENDUM. CONTINUED NON-APPEARANCE OF DOCUMENT, AN VAGUENESS OF PRESS COMMENTARY ABOUT HOW NEW ALGERIAN STATE TO BE SET UP, SUPPORT THIS CONCLUSION.

8. HOW EASILY ALGERIANS WILL ACCEPT PROPOSITION THAT CONSTITUTION IS SECONDARY TO NATIONAL CHARTER AND THEREFORE NONDEBATABLE UNCERTAIN. CERTAIN HIGH REGIME FIGURES, AND, WE UNDERSTAND, ELEMENTS OF MASS ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL, HAVE APPARENTLY CONSIDERED DOCUMENT SUFFICIENTLY IMPORTANT TO ARGUE VIGOROUSLY OVER ITS WORDING DURING CLOSED-DOOR DEBATES. WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE IF THIS WRANGLING REPEATS ITSELF ONCE CONSTITUTION IS MADE PUBLIC. PARKER

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